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MANUEL ARTIME

Exile Leader Tells Anti-Castro Plans

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Editor's Note: Manuel Artime, one of the leaders of the Cuban exile invasion at the Bay of Pigs in April, 1961, in the following exclusive interview tells much of the Cuban anti-Communist plans to topple Fidel Castro.

By JAY WEBBER
Copley News Service
MANAGUA, Nicaragua —

Manuel Artime 32, exiled Cuban physician, is not only a man without a country. He's a man who is finding it hard to get a base for operations against Fidel Castro and the Communists who dominate the Cuba of his birth.

Artime, young leader of the militantly anti-Castro Movement of Revolutionary Recovery (MRR), one of the more active Cuban exile groups, is learning the hard way that Latin exiles get more sympathy than material support.

IN AN EXCLUSIVE interview with Copley News Service here, Artime disclosed that anti-Castro Cubans' "basic problem" is the lack of a jumping-off spot for armed action against the Communists in Cuba.

"We cannot compete against G-2 (military intelligence), the CIA, FBI and the Coast Guard. We cannot understand the U.S. attitude. You assist Vietnamese to die for liberty in Asia but you deny the right to Cuban," Artime said.

These are some of the questions I asked and his answers:

Q. Do you intend to build a large invading army?

A. No. This will be composed of several hundred, with a couple of thousand specialists working within Cuba itself.

Q. You say specialists. What kind of specialists?

A. Commando type.

Q. Do you believe that President Kennedy's economic policy

sure on Cuba will eventually cause the collapse of Castro?

A. It is like trying to cure cancer with a bandage. Many types of cancer require radical surgery. Communism is one of these; it can only be cured by the knife.

Q. What aid have you received so far from the Central American republics?

A. The republics have been very receptive to the idea (of toppling Castro). They have given me aid. In what manner, I am not at liberty to say. But I am encouraged. Yet the republics cannot commit themselves. So far, we have not received an offer of a place to train our men.

Q. Have you men in training?

A. Yes. Don't ask me where. I will have to refuse you an answer.

Q. How many?

A. Like your Communists, I take the Fifth Amendment of that question.

Q. Do you anticipate difficulty with the CIA, FBI or the State Department?

A. We have no troops training on U.S. soil anywhere. We do not expect to be where we can be influenced by these agencies.

Q. How long will you have to train troops?

A. Training troops to infiltrate and fight is no longer a problem. There is a sufficient number now ready, trained and ready to go. The basic problem remaining is enough bases in Latin America from which to operate.

Q. Do you need more help from any source?

A. Only bases for operation.

Q. How soon will you go back to Cuba?

A. I will be fighting, along with other Cubans, against Castro-communism in Cuba within a year.

Artime reminded me that, in 1960, he predicted he would be in Cuba within a year and "I was in Cuba fighting in eight months."

That was the unsuccessful exile landings at the Bay of Pigs in April, 1961.

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